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ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to understand the role of culturally-specific styles of discourse in the classroom. The paper uses and expands upon three categories of classroom language use (control, curriculum, and critique) to present data on how a Puerto Rican American teacher uses repetition and discourse styles that have African and African American origins to perform a variety of classroom functions: to control classroom behavior and talk, to better teach and highlight elements of the curriculum, and to critique the use of standard English in an elementary classroom context. In the first section, findings are provided on the form and function of repetition in research on African oral traditions and African American language use in church and classroom contexts. The context of the study is described, including a the setting, participants, and methods of data collection and analysis. It is concluded that the teacher's use of culturally specific forms of repetition enhanced the way she controlled classroom talk and behavior and increased students' participation and learning of the curriculum. One table and 14 references are included. (Author/KFT)

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ED 446 431

Rhythm and Resource: Repetition as a Linguistic Style in an Urban Elementary Classroom

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This paper seeks to understand the role of culturally-specific styles of discourse in the classroom. I use and expand upon Foster's (1995) three categories of classroom language use (control, curriculum, and critique) to present data on how an urban, Puerto Rican teacher uses forms of repetition that have African and African American origins to accomplish a variety of classroom functions: 1) To control the classroom behavior and talk; 2) To highlight elements of the curriculum; and 3) To critique the use of Standard English language in an elementary classroom context.

Introduction

The register of teacher talk (TT) is often parodied in movies and television. Audiences have had a good laugh at films such as Ferris Buehler's Day Off when the teacher used a patterned routine of asking a question, calling his pupils' names twice ("Buehler, Buehler"), and then providing the answer to his own question. Cazden (1988) characterizes TT as having "a higher pitch, more exaggerated intonation and careful enunciation, shorter sentences and more frequent repetitions, and many more questions than the same adults would use in speaking to other adults" (Cazden 1988: 160). Although "repetition" in the classroom has often been humorously portrayed as symbolic of teacher's emotional and stylistic distance from his or her students, this paper discusses an alternative. I focus on how African American styles of discourse influence the forms and functions of repetition used to bridge rather than widen social distance between a teacher and her students.

My purpose here is to describe how a culturally-specific form of repetition is used by a Puerto Rican teacher with her African American[1] and Puerto Rican students and the functions it serves. According to Okpewho

[1] I use the terms African American and Black interchangeably, as do members of this community.

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(1992), repetition is one of the most fundamental characteristic features of African oral traditions. In oral literature or story-telling, repetition can be delivered in the form of a single utterance, phrase, or refrain, and is found to perform a variety of aesthetic as well as practical functions. Likewise, studies in the United States of a Black church in the South (Sutton 1988) and Black teachers and students in an urban community college (Foster 1989, 1995) have found repetition to be a salient feature of church and classroom discourse. Urban Puerto Rican culture and English language use in the United States is heavily influenced by the linguistic styles and performance norms of African Americans. According to Zentella (1997) Puerto Rican English (PRE) incorporates features of both Standard English (SE) and African American Vernacular English (AAVE) and has few of its own characteristics (Zentella 1997: 45). This influence helps to explain the appearance of repetition in a Puerto Rican English language classroom setting.

In the first section of this paper I will present some of the findings on the form and function of repetition in research on African oral traditions and African American language use in church and classroom contexts in the United States. Next, I will describe the context of this study including a description of the setting, participants, and method of data collection and analysis. Finally, I will use and expand upon Foster's (1995) three categories of classroom language use (control, curriculum, and critique) to present data on how an urban, Puerto Rican teacher uses repetition to control the classroom behavior and talk, to highlight elements of the curriculum, and critique the use of Standard English language in an elementary classroom context.

Repetition

Okpewho (1992) explains that in African oral traditions "fullness, not economy of expression is a fundamental virtue...the oral performer who keeps the audience's attention through the night is more likely to be rewarded than the one who sends them home after only a very short performance" (Okpewho 1992: 83). Repetition is an important stylistic device that is used to captivate the listener's attention, emphasize and build on important details in the narrative, and maintain an element of rhythm and musical charm throughout a performance (Okpewho 1992: 70-88). Okpewho suggests the use of repetition is successful when it increases listeners' excitement, participation, and attention to detail; whereas, repetition is less successful when it is used as a means to fill a gap in a narrative and mark time through simple, unimaginative changes (Okpewho 1992: 73).

In the African American Baptist church, repetition also is used as a means to increase the congregation's active involvement in the service. Sutton (1988) has identified repetition as a fundamental characteristic of chanted speech patterns in the Southern church. He describes the chant as a form of

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oral poetry using regular rhythmic patterns uncharacteristic of speech:

> The emphasis in chant is less strictly referential or denotative and becomes more strongly affective or poetic. That the message be formally well ordered is as important as the cogency of its reasoning. There are usually more abstractions, more formulaic phrases, and more repetition (of both words and whole sections) than in spoken passages (Sutton 1988: 161-2)

Given the functions of repetition described above, it appears that its selective use in classrooms along with AAVE cadence, intonation, and stress patterns might contribute to increasing the attention and participation of urban minority students in the classroom. There is very little research on the use of repetition among minority teachers and students. However, studies by Cazden (1988) and Foster (1989, 1995) illuminate the forms and functions of shared language and stylistic features in minority teacher and student classrooms. Cazden found that the use of *cariño*, a nurturing communicative style, appeared to contribute to the strong and positive sense of community she found among Mexican-descent teachers and students in a Chicago elementary school (Cazden 1988). This nurturing style was expressed through the teachers' selective use of diminutives, an emphasis on *respeto*, respect for others, and references to the children's family life in the classroom.

Foster's (1989) study has provided a detailed description of the forms and functions of shared speech style between a Black, female teacher and Black students in an urban community college. In particular this research documents the teacher's use of language and performance norms in the classroom that draw on the influences of African American speech styles and Church language patterns such as vowel elongation, cadence manipulation, and repetition. In a second study Foster (1995) distinguished three categories that capture the dominant purpose of the African-American teacher's discourse: a) language of control, b) language of curriculum, and c) language of critique. Foster argues that the teacher's selective use of the stylistic features of AAVE, such as repetition, shed light on the sociocultural, sociopolitical, and affective factors contributing to her success with students in the classroom.

From 1997 to 1998 I conducted ethnographic fieldwork on an urban educator's successful rapport with her students and the frequent use of repetition among other stylistic features in her classroom. However, Ms. Diana Capero [2] who taught third and fourth grade is not Black, but Puerto

[2] The teacher and students names used in this paper are pseudonyms.

Rican as are the majority of her students. As mentioned, although repetition has not yet been documented among Puerto Ricans in English language classrooms, Zentella (1997) has found that Puerto Ricans and African Americans who live in the same neighborhoods also share several stylistic as well as linguistic features of AAVE. My findings of the extensive use of repetition in a Puerto Rican teacher's classroom support Zentella's findings. In this study I will focus on repetition, a frequent stylistic feature of the Puerto Rican teacher's discourse. I use and expand upon Foster's three categories of classroom language use (control, curriculum, and critique) to answer the following research questions:

How does a Puerto Rican elementary school teacher in an urban context use the stylistic device of repetition?

What functions does repetition serve during classroom instruction?

Method

Setting

This study is based on fieldwork I conducted at Potter Thomas Elementary School [3] from October 1997 to April 1998. Potter Thomas is located in North Philadelphia where there is a substantial Puerto Rican and African American community. According to a Potter Thomas Grant Proposal (1998) 81% of the students are Latino (94% of whom are Puerto Rican), 18.4% are African American, and .6% are white. However, when I asked one teacher how they consider the many students of mixed race, she replied: "It's like the one-drop rule—one drop and you're Latino." This teacher implied that several students come from homes where there is one African American parent and one Puerto Rican parent, but that mixed heritage is always counted as Puerto Rican.

North Philadelphia is commonly referred to in the media as "The Badlands," due to the considerable poverty, crime and drugs in the area. The influences of the community often penetrate the elementary school walls: during the winter 1997-1998 holiday a student was shot through the door of his home as a result of drug dealing in the community, and this spring (1999) a student had to leave her third grade classroom because her stepfather had raped and killed her mother over Memorial Day weekend. Despite the influences of drugs and violence in the neighborhood, the school, which was run by Puerto Rican administrators and a large number of Puerto Rican teachers (63.9%), has been noted for its perseverance and excellence

[3] The actual name of the school is used with permission.

in education (Cahnmann 1998). According to a rating that includes attendance records and test scores, Potter Thomas was one of the top ten most improved schools in the Philadelphia district during the 1996-1997 school year. The school continues to attract large funding projects and district support for their unique bilingual education model that encourages all students to acquire Spanish and English fluency.

Participants

In October of 1997 the school principal introduced Ms. Carpero to me as one of the school's most outstanding teachers. Because of Ms. Carpero's strengths as a teacher, she had been assigned to a small group of 18 third- and fourth-grade "at-risk" students, so-called because of exceptionally low test scores and behavior problems in previous classrooms. After observing in Ms. Carpero's classroom, I was struck by the close relationships she maintained with her students, and the rhythm she used in her classroom both to manage students' behavior and encourage their participation and excitement. When asked about her success with students, Ms. Carpero told me she felt that her young age enabled her to relate to the students in ways that other teachers could not. She was 26 and had been teaching at Potter Thomas for the last five years. However, Ms. Carpero shared more than relatively close age with her students. Three of her students (in the 1997-1998 school year) had African American mothers and fathers, and the remaining 15 students were Puerto Rican or had at least one Puerto Rican parent. Ms. Carpero is herself a US-born Puerto Rican, who grew up in a single family home in North Philadelphia and attended Potter Thomas Elementary School when she was a child. Her mother has continued to live in the neighborhood of the school and Ms. Carpero has attended the same church as many Potter Thomas students.

Between November 1997 and April 1998 I visited Ms. Carpero's classroom every week for 45 minutes to four hours at a time. I also had weekly telephone conversations with the teacher about her practice, and met twice with Ms. Carpero outside of Potter Thomas to discuss her lessons. In February of 1998 I made three videotapes of her classroom as a means to analyze her interactions with students during whole-group and small-group lessons.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data used for this study is one 35 minute tape of Ms. Carpero's classroom during a period of whole-group instruction. I wanted to analyze the particular stylistic features of Ms. Carpero's classroom discourse that enable her to have an intimate rapport with her students and create a positive classroom atmosphere of learning. The first phase of this research consisted of transcribing all audible classroom interaction as well as aspects of

non-verbal behavior such as hand-raising and teacher movement. Once these were transcribed, I identified the use of repetition as a salient, and fundamental feature of the teacher's interaction with her students. Finally, I developed a coding schema to enable me to isolate the different functions achieved by the use of repetitive words, phrases, and refrains in the classroom. I began with 12 tentative categories of repetition based on the form and illocutionary force of the utterance as evidenced by student and teacher interactions on the tape. However, when I began coding I realized that many of these categories overlapped with one another. After a careful review of the literature on the use of repetition (Foster 1989, 1995; Okpewho 1992; Sutton 1988), I found that the 12 categories I had identified fit well within the three-tiered framework used by Foster: the language of control, curriculum, and critique.

Findings

Language of Control

In Foster's (1995) study, "language of control" refers to the language style the teacher uses to sanction and encourage a particular student's behavior. Foster describes "behavior" as aspects of educational achievement that, despite differences in educational preparation, are within the students' control, such as attendance, following instructions, completing homework, and doing extra credit. She uses the term "gettin' on the case" to characterize the speech event when the teacher uses a public forum to provide critical feedback to overall as well as individual performance in the class. Foster stresses that the public nature of "gettin' on the case" does not pit students one against the other, but, rather, encourages individuals to compete against themselves and their past performance. She describes this event as teacher-dominated and entirely in Standard English (SE).

In Ms. Carpero's class, what I have characterized as the language of control works in a similar way. In this elementary school setting, "behavior" concerns students' control over completing tasks such as homework as well as control over one's ability to sustain attention across activities within a lesson. Repetition often becomes a rhythmic device that helps students transition between small-group activity and teacher-centered activity or between one subject and the next. The following segment illustrates Ms. Carpero's use of repetition to control classroom behavior and talk. Here she transitioned from the whole group reading of a Shel Silverstein poem called, "The Googies," to asking students to recall questions about the poem's details.

1	Ms Carpero:	If you hear me clap one time.
2	Students:	(One Clap, few claps are in sinc)
3	Ms Carpero:	If you hear me clap twice.
4	Students:	(Two Claps, more are in sinc)
5	Ms Carpero:	If you hear me clap three times.
6	Students:	(Three Claps, most in sinc)
7	Ms Carpero:	If you hear me clap four.
8	Students:	(Four Claps, all in sinc)
9	Ms Carpero:	Let's start with the top. Who can raise their hand quietly
10		let us know—and I want you to write down the problem and take it
11		down in your notes—Renaldo, you need to have a better attitude.
12	Student 2:	Miss. I can go to the bath room.
13	Ms. Carpero:	Sit up, sit up. I'm gonna wait, I'm gonna wait.
14		Who can raise their hand and tell me, how much, how much, I'm
15		gonna wait, I have Thadiuss' attention, Daniel's attention and Luis'
16		attention. Thank you Luis. Who can raise their hand and tell me
17		how much was one lean one? how much is a lean one? Raise your
18		hand, don't spoil it![4]

The first part of the above rhythmic device (Lines 1-7), "If you hear me," functioned as a means to control classroom behavior and talk, and appeared three times throughout the 35 minute segment of analysis. In Lines 9-16 the repetition of commands, assertions, and questions such as- "sit up," "I'm gonna wait," and "who can raise their hand?"-also served as ways to control classroom talk and support a return to a single floor, where one person spoke at a time (Edelsky 1981). Singular admonitions to individuals or the class as a whole such as "Renaldo, you need to have a better attitude," and "Don't spoil it" stood out as punctuations in the rhythmic sequence she had created through the context of repetitive and parallel phrasing[5].

In the 35 minutes of tape analyzed I found that Ms. Carpero used repetition most often (N = 18) as a means to control classroom behavior, talk, and activity. Twice the teacher was explicit about her use of this device, stating phrases like "Ooh, let's try that again," between repeated instructions. Throughout my participant observation in this class I have witnessed the effectiveness of Ms. Carpero's use of repetition as a management

[4] **Transcription conventions:**
/ = overlapping speech on final syllable
= = simultaneous speech, whole word
S = one student (numbers are assigned to show multiple students)
Ss = more than one student
Selective portions of repetition are underlined
Non-standard lexical and phonological variation is written phonetically

[5] Although not discussed in this paper, the teacher's use of repetition is accompanied by various paralinguistic features such as gesture, volume and tone that are characteristic of African American speech norms. Due to time constraints and developing analytical skills I do not include such an analysis here. However, the study would undoubtedly benefit from a closer examination of these features.

strategy. Students who had been "behavior problems" in other classrooms typically responded to Ms. Carpero's rhythmic cues.

Language of Curriculum

Language of curriculum describes the language used when classroom instruction is taking place. The use of repetition is frequent during classroom instruction, and incorporates a style described as "chanting" in Sutton's (1988) work in the Black Church. One function of repetition is to increase students' verbal and non-verbal participation in the classroom lessons. The constraints imposed by the use of questioning individual students in the classroom using the Initiation, Response, and Evaluation (IRE) sequence (Mehan 1979) is that only one child is expected to participate at a time. Ms. Carpero's use of repetition ensured that when a question is repeated several times using varying intonation, cadence, and stress patterns, it lengthens the amount of time students have to think about the question asked and raise their hands for a chance to participate. The following question occurs 9 minutes and 53 seconds into the 35 minute mathematics lesson after the children have read the poem: "Who can raise their hand and tell me, quickly, how much, how much does it cost for a noisy kid? How much did the Googies have to pay for a noisy kid?" The teacher completed the question and calls on a student at 10 minutes and 9 seconds (time elapsed = 1:16). The following is a non-verbal transcript that illustrates the kinds of response elicited when the teacher elaborated her question by repeating "how much" three times[6].

Table 1. Timing of Non-Verbal Cues

Time in seconds: student talking (S)	**Movement**
9:57: S1, S2, S3, & S7	turn head
9:58: S2	raises hand
10:00: S3	raises hand
10:01: Ss 4 & 5	raise hands
10:05: S6	raises hand
106:47: S7	raises hand

[6]Six children sit outside the frame of the video camera. While only 7 children are observed participating in this sequence, this does not include the nonverbal participation of those outside the camera's view.

Students in this classroom were encouraged to participate in a variety of non-verbal as well as non-oral ways, and therefore participated more than they might otherwise do with purely verbal responses. In addition to hand-raising, each student had a math journal where they are all expected to write their responses to instructional questions. As Ms. Carpero used it, the response part of the IRE sequence usually entailed that all students use the written channel before the verbal channel when providing an answer to the teacher's questions. In this way the teacher is able to repeat different kinds of evaluations to many students at a time. In the following sequence, Ms. Carpero repeated out loud what she was seeing when she walked around to evaluate students' written responses.

1	Ms. Carpero:	Shh, hold on. I want to see/ (in sing-song voice as she is walking
2		around the room)
3	Student:	(Looks up to the teacher) Ms. Carpero/
4	Ms. Carpero:	/That work. (over students' paper) And I'm seeing some nice note
5		taking! Wow. And I'm seeing, ooh, very nice. Debra has the date at
6		the top of her paper. Super.

A third form of non-verbal participation is through hand signals. Throughout the lesson Ms. Carpero will repeat the phrase "Show me with your hand signals," inviting students to respond to a given question or response as a group. Alternating whole-group, non-verbal and/or non-oral responses with individual, verbal responses helped to mitigate against the fact that Ms. Carpero was only able to call on one of the 18 students at a time. Students were encouraged to wave both hands in the air frenetically to show approval of a given response or repeatedly cross both hands in front of their chests to show disapproval of a peer's response. Through sharing the power of critique and approval with her students, Ms. Carpero altered the rules of politeness (Brown & Levinson 1978) in a way that enabled her to lessen the social distance between herself and her students and to provide them with more direct feedback. The following interaction illustrated the way the class participated in correcting and guiding a student towards an understanding of where to use the decimal in a three digit number problem about money. Here, Carlos had just crossed his arms back and forth in front of his chest to show his disapproval about a problem that had just been collectively solved by the teacher and his classmates.

1	Carlos:	(arm waving across his chest to signify disagreement)
2	Ms. Carpero:	Why do you disagree?
3	Carlos:	I disagree because that says one dollar and fifteen cents and is'
4		supposed to be eleven dollars and fifteen cents.
5	Student:	No thas'/
6	Ms. Carpero:	How many people think its eleven dollars and fifteen cents?
7	Students:	Nooo (accompanied by negative hand signals)
8	Ms. Carpero:	we have
9	Carlos:	Yeah, eleven dollars five cents.
10	Students:	(Several continue negative hand signals)
11	Ms. Carpero:	Look at this: How many digits do we have?
12	Student 1:	three!

13	Ms. Carpero:	How many digits do we have?
14	Student 2:	three
15	Student 3:	two!
16	Student 4:	three!
17	Students:	(Students raise two or three fingers in the air)
18	Ms. Carpero:	How many digits?
19	Student 5:	Two!
20	Students:	Three!
21	Carlos:	Three!
22	Ms. Carpero:	One, two, three.
23	Students:	Thas' right! (points to board, other students wave affirmative hand
24		signals)
25	Ms. Carpero:	How many digits ? One, two, three.
26	Student:	'Cause two numbers belongs in the end!
27	Ms. Carpero:	How many digits do we have, Carlos? One, two, three.
28		How many do we have here? One, two, three.
29	Student:	Yeah.

In the above discourse, the use of hand, arm, and finger gestures in Lines 1, 7, 10, 17, and 23 were essential nonverbal channels for student participation in the classroom. The teacher repeated her question using various intonation patterns until she observed agreement among the students' gestures as well as verbal responses. The repetitive questioning device culminated in Line 25 when a student provided the correct explanation for the decimal placement: "'Cause two numbers belongs in the end!" Thus, the student, rather than the teacher, produced and explained answers to questions in the classroom.

As described above verbal and non-verbal repetition is used to increase student participation and to affirm and guide students' responses while classroom curriculum is being taught. In addition, repetition is also used as a means to layer new and/or important concepts on top of ones that have previously been introduced. This effect is called "piling" in African oral literature (Okpewho 1992), when a narrator repeats a refrain as a means to present successive sequences in a story. In the following interaction, Ms. Carpero repeated the number "80" and the question "What does 80 cents mean" in order to stress the importance of labeling written information in mathematics.

1	Ms. Carpero:	Well Thadius how did you solve it? How did you get that?
2	Thadius:	Adding it up
3	Ms. Carpero:	What did you add up? two plus two, 9 plus 9?
4	Thadius:	80 plus 80.
5	Ms. Carpero:	80 what plus 80, 80 dogs plus 80 dogs?
6	Thadius:	80 cents!
7	Ms. Carpero:	80 what?
8	Thadius:	80 dogs plus 80 cents
9	Ms. Carpero:	Well why am I gonna add? Who can help Thadius? Why didn't,
10		why am I gonna add 80 cents plus 80 cents. What does the 80 cents
11		mean? What does 80 cents mean? Renaldo, what does 80 cents
12		mean? What does 80 cents mean in this problem?
13	Renaldo:	Change.

14	Catalina:	Ooh Ms!
15	Ms. Carpero:	What does it mean in this problem?
16	Students:	Change!
17	Ms. Carpero:	Not just change, but what does it mean?
18	Students:	Kids
19	Ms. Carpero:	Raise your hand. What does the 80 cents mean?
20	Student:	Ooh ooh Ms.!
21	Ms. Carpero:	Edgar, what does 80 cents mean in this problem?
22	Student:	Kids=
23	Edgar:	(??) =children
24	Ms. Carpero:	Well what kind of child cos' 80 cents?
25	Edgar:	The husky children
26	Ms. Carpero:	80 cents means one husky child. One husky child (she illustrates
27		how to label the math problem on the board).

In this playful poem, the fictional "Googies" charge different prices for different types of children they collect and sell. The poem lends itself to cross-curricular teaching, providing the perfect opportunity to work on mathematics through poetry. In Line 2 in the above excerpt, Thadius explained that he found his answer ($1.60) by "Adding it up." Mrs. Carpero used the "piling" technique of repetitive queries to move Thadius to a more mathematical description of the process of his work. The repetition of "80 what" and "What does 80 cents mean?" kept the momentum of participation going until Thadius and his classmates moved from "it" (Line 2) to "80" (Line 4) to "80 cents"(Line 6) and ultimately to labeling 80 cents as the cost of "one husky child" (Lines 26-27).

Language of Critique

In Foster's research the language of critique refers to the language that teachers use to challenge the dominant ideology of the state regarding schooling. The language of critique is evidenced not only in what teachers talk about in their classrooms, but also the languages themselves that teachers use in classrooms. Ms. Carpero's incorporation of AAVE and PRE linguistic styles and performance norms can be seen as challenging the dominant ideology about schooling that insists on the strict adherence to Standard, monolingual English in the classroom. When I asked Ms. Carpero about her use of Non-Standard varieties of English and occasional use of Spanish in her classroom, she revealed a philosophy about classroom language use that challenges the status quo. Ms. Carpero felt that her role was to encourage students to participate in all forms of language, rather than police students' strict adherence to Standard English norms. The teacher's own selective use of Non-Standard English lowered the social distance between herself and the students. Ms. Carpero also code-switched into Spanish on occasion if she felt that the use of Spanish would help a child who spoke Spanish at home to understand a concept or feel comfortable participating in her classroom.

However, Ms. Carpero was aware that her students also needed to learn the Standard form of English in order to succeed in public domains outside of her classroom. Rather than correct students' language directly, the teacher chose moments in the classroom to model Standard English usage. She often used repetition to respond to what a student had just said in Non-Standard English into the Standard English form. For example, when Namika, a student who has recently transitioned into English language instruction said: "The Googies want for the husky kid, 80 cents," Ms. Carpero repeated Namika's response: "80 cents. That's how much they paid (teacher's emphasis) for it." Similarly, when Nector offered: "It don't work," Ms. Carpero asked: "Nector, why doesn't 90 cents work?" In this way Ms. Carpero chose moments during her instruction to model Standard English, while validating the use of Non-Standard English as well.

Conclusion

This paper has explored a Puerto Rican teacher's strategic use of repetition as a distinct cultural resource, and how she used this resource with students who are speakers of languages and dialects other than Standard English. Though it is difficult to infer how this teacher's style contributed to her success in the classroom, I believe her use of culturally-specific forms of repetition did enhance the way she controled classroom talk and behavior, increased students' participation and learning of the curriculum, and critiqued the use of Standard and Non-Standard language use in the classroom. Cazden (1988) concludes her study of the language style used by Mexican-American educators with the following challenge: "For every teacher to find a personal style that is equivalent in contributing a strong and positive sense of community with each year's group of learners." Ms. Carpero's use of repetition helped her meet this challenge. Her personal classroom discourse style built on the cultural patterns of language use in the local African American and Puerto Rican community. Her use of this stylistic resource served to validate, rather than stigmatize, the language use of minority students.

Gumperz (1972) discusses the success of many political leaders who rely on the alternation between Standard and Non-Standard language styles for rhetorical effect (185). Who could forget Dr. Martin Luther King's powerful "I have a dream" speech; his memorable refrain illustrating the use of repetition in the African American church? It is important to recognize the value and influence that African American speech styles have had on the English language use of other minority communities. Most studies of minority classroom discourse tend to compare Non-Standard speech styles to those of the White, middle class (Phillips 1983; Heath 1983). Here, I have attempted to shift the focus from routing all influence through White norms towards an understanding of the mutual influences minority groups have

had on one another's language use; specifically, that some degree of convergence between stylistic features of AAVE and PRE has developed in urban areas where both communities are in frequent contact.

Repetition is only one of many AAVE stylistic features used by this Puerto Rican teacher in her classroom. It is important that future research analyze both the linguistic and paralinguistic features of urban minority student-teacher discourse, such as cadence, prosody, posture, gesture, and dress, to fully understand the implications of such use in the classroom. Another direction for future research is to consider the variation between Puerto Rican teachers' language use in the classroom according to gender, age, place of birth, years in the classroom, and language of instruction. In this way we can understand the extent to which Ms. Carpero's speech style is typical among Puerto Rican teachers, and the extent this style is reflective of this teacher's unique idiolect. Regardless, research should continue to pursue ethnographic and sociolinguistic accounts of the language style used between educators and students who share cultural, linguistic, and/or socio-economic backgrounds.

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